

Exercise, exercise!

Dix checks emergency ops, plans



Ryan Morton

PAPER TRAIL -- LTC Mark Nozaki, Staff Judge Advocate, discusses the legality of blocking entrances to the post with Director of Public Works Dave Peckham during an Installation Force Protection Exercise at Fort Dix Jan. 12 through 14. Right, Fort Dix Commander Col. Ronald Thaxton discusses security at the Contingency Operations Location with Dennis Bush, director of plans, training, mobilization and security, during the second day of the exercise.

Carolee Nisbet
Editor

In the short space of eight hours this week, Fort Dix was faced with a huge range fire, the deaths of two employees due to an unexploded ordnance incident, two fatal traffic accidents, a terrorist hostage crisis and the threat of additional terrorist attacks -- all on paper.

The laundry list of crises was all part of an Installation Force Protection Exercise Jan. 12 through 14 designed to test and stretch the post's capabilities to handle multiple emergency events.

The table-top exercise was staged at Fort Dix by Installation Management Command and conducted by the Army Management Staff College (AMSC) Team MPRI contractors.

Directors, staff and others gathered in the Emergency Operations Center Conference Room for the event, while representatives from

each arena met in a second floor classroom to relay scenarios and collect responses.

The intent of the exercise was to test the staff's information processing, sharing, recording, analysis and decision making abilities in the event of a "real world" situation. The IPFEX events were designed to exercise the post's leadership responsibilities while supporting the Incident Commander and the garrison commander during a simulated attack.

While the incidents looked easy on paper, the responses from the staff were anything but.

For example, day two of the exercise included an inject of credible threats of a terrorist attack on Fort Dix -- an action that caused the post to ramp up security to Force Protection Condition Delta. While Department of Public Safety, Directorate of Logistics and Directorate of Public Works representatives scrambled to close all but one checkpoint and block the rest, personnel advisors pinpointed key personnel who would remain on the installation and Directorate of Resource Management retailed the cost of overtime, materials and extra equipment.

As the exercise was designed to do, the heavy load of information and demands quickly pinpointed areas where planning was insufficient, personnel resources were stretched beyond expectations and processes did not work as anticipated.

Information management -- ensuring the right information got to the right person at the right time -- was also tested, and many modifications made before the second day of the event.

"I thought the exercise was a success," said Col. Ronald Thaxton, installation commander. "We have some work to do, but not a lot."

Report charts progress in Iraq

Jim Garamone
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, Jan. 14, 2009 -- The lack of essential services has replaced security as the major concern in Iraq, pointing to the progress the country has been making, according to a Defense Department report released yesterday.

The report to Congress, titled "Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq," said the security situation in the country continues to improve.

The report covers the period through the end of November, and

does not address the change of responsibility to the Iraqi government for security under the status-of-forces agreement that went into effect Jan. 1.

Iraqi forces are increasing their

The insurgency is declining, and al-Qaida in Iraq is increasingly isolated. Many Shia extremists are seeking amnesty and leaving Iranian-supported militant groups such as Jaysh al-Mahdi and affiliated organizations.

capabilities, the report says, and the Iraqi government has demonstrated its rejection of extremism and has assumed responsibility for the "Sons

of Iraq" civilian security group program.

"This period witnessed a nationwide reduction in civilian deaths by almost 63 percent compared to the same period in 2007," the report says.

Further, no increase in violence took place during or immediately following the holy month of Ramadan -- typically a time of increased attacks.

The insurgency is declining, and al-Qaida in Iraq is increasingly isolated, the report says. Many Shia extremists are seeking amnesty and leaving Iranian-supported militant groups such as Jaysh al-Mahdi and affiliated organizations, it notes, though both Sunni and Shia extremist groups still are capable of conducting attacks despite their weakened condition.

Most of Iraq now is under Iraqi control.

The status-of-forces agreement places Iraqi forces completely in the lead and calls for all coalition combat

(continued on page 3)

Snipers target tough training

Ryan Morton and Pascual Flores
Fort Dix Public Affairs

Chosen for their superior shooting skills, specially selected Soldiers from the 56th Stryker Brigade Combat Team (SBCT), Pennsylvania Army National Guard, weathered frigid cold January 8, zeroing their weapons in preparation for their deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

With targets ranging ranging from 100 to 600 meters, these elite shooters, utilizing various military weapons, trained to become one with their weapons and equipment in preparation for their duties as Squad Designated Marksmen

(SDM), or team snipers. "The Army teaches the general Soldier to shoot up to 300 meters, while we train them to shoot at 600 meters," said Maj. James Fluck, 56th SBCT Civil Affairs Officer and Officer-in-Charge of the sniper training.

Required to meet higher standards, the sniper Soldier must be able to deliver discriminatory, highly accurate rifle fire against enemy targets that cannot be engaged successfully by the regular riflemen because of range, size, location, or visibility.

Assisted in their training by Soldiers from the Fort Dix Small Arms Readiness Group (SARG), Soldiers from the 56th SBCT, chosen as SDMs, zeroed their designated weapons and made the necessary adjustments to their scopes, assuring proper placing of steel on the targets.

Referring to the Soldiers of the Fort Dix SARG, "These are great trainers, the most professional shooters I've ever seen in the Army and they're really doing a great job helping us train," said Fluck.

Utilizing advanced technological optic devices on their weapons, a sniper can take the battle to the enemy from greater distances, reducing the risk of injury to themselves and their fellow Soldiers.

Armed with various weapons that include the M-4 carbine equipped with the Advanced Combat Optic Gunsight (ACOG), the most advanced mid-range battle scope, to the battle tested M-14 rifle and M-24 sniper rifle with a 10-power Leupold telescope sight,

these riflemen from the 56th SBCT can engage targets out to 800 meters. Honing their shooting skills at the Fort Dix ranges could make the difference between life and death for their fellow comrades or another human life.

The 56th SBCT is home to numerous Soldiers with combat experience, and has Soldiers who work in a wide array of civilian careers such as law enforcement, engineering, architecture, accounting, plumbing, education, carpentry, and farming.

Fluck says that his unit's primary mission in Iraq will be to reduce insurgent activity in U.S.-controlled areas, aiding the Iraqi Army and police forces to be more self-sufficient, and helping the Iraqi people rebuild the infrastructure.



NEWSNOTES

ID Card facility offers Saturday hours

The ID Card facility located at 5418 S. Scott Plaza will be open Saturday, Feb. 7 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more information call 562-3373 or 562-6143.

Medication disposal can pose environmental threat

Proper disposal of unused or expired medicine is an emerging environmental issue. As with any household waste, the disposal method chosen can have a direct effect on safety and the health of the environment.

Disposal via the toilet or the sink takes your drugs into the sewage system. Modern water treatment plants are not fully designed to deal with medication disposal.

The full extent of environmental damage and the long-term health risks of even a small amount of medications in our drinking water remain unknown.

Any unused or expired medications can be brought back to your pharmacy for a safer, environmentally friendly disposal.

Town Hall Meeting on calendar Feb. 5

The next Town Hall Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, Feb. 5, at 2 p.m. in Timmermann Center, Bldg. 5441.

Topics to be presented include Joint Base Update; Management of Change in the Work Environment; Suicide Prevention; Anti-terrorism/Force Protection (AT/FP) and Installation Force Protection Exercise (IPFEX) After Action Review (AAR); Prevention of Sexual Harassment; Construction/Housing Update; Morale, Welfare, Recreation (MWR) Events; and Winter Driving Safety. Employees can ask questions at the meeting, or submit them in advance to Bill Howard at the Plans, Analysis, and Integration Office (PAIO). Questions may be submitted by phone 562-6660, via e-mail at bill.howard1@us.army.mil, or sent directly to Bldg. 5418, Room 217A (adjacent to interior of PAIO Conference Room). Please submit advance questions no later than Monday, Jan. 26. Questions will be kept confidential and may be submitted anonymously.

WEATHER

FRIDAY -- Cloudy, slight chance of flurries, high of 19 degrees and overnight low of 4 degrees.

SATURDAY -- Cloudy skies and slightly warmer, high of 24 degrees and low of 17.

SUNDAY -- Flurries throughout day, daytime high of 31 degrees and overnight low of 22.

MONDAY -- More flurries, breezy, with high of 32 and low of 16 degrees.

TUESDAY -- Afternoon clouds, high of 29 and overnight low of 16 degrees.

WEDNESDAY -- Fair with mostly clear skies, high of 30 degrees and overnight low of 10.

THURSDAY -- Clear and continued cold, daytime high of 32 degrees and low of 27.

FRIDAY -- Cloudy with showers, breezy, daytime high of 37 and overnight low of 25 degrees.

history

FDR's New Deal fought ravages of Great Depression, Dust Bowl



Steve Snyder
Public Affairs Staff

"While (Republicans) prate of economic laws, men and women are starving. We must lay hold of the fact that economic laws are not made by nature. They are made by human beings."

So said President Franklin D. Roosevelt when he launched a series of government programs and initiatives called "The New Deal" to turn back ravages of an economic Great Depression in 1932.

Today, economists and historians still debate how effective the New Deal was in turning aside economic disaster. One cliché hallowed by many is that it was only with the advent of World War II that the country finally left the Great Depression behind.

In 1995 a survey published by Wake Forest economist Robert Whaples found that 49 percent of those polled agreed with the statement that, "Taken as a whole, government policies of the New Deal served to lengthen and deepen the Great Depression."

Fifty-one percent disagreed, though, considering the New Deal to be basically a success.

Today, alas, we face economic woes that may reach proportions similar to those infecting the nation in the 1930s. While economists invariably quarrel over proposed solutions, political leaders would do well to follow certain precepts favored by FDR.

Roosevelt thought:

• "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself..."

• "It is common sense to take a method and try it. If it fails, admit it frankly and try another. But above all, try something."

FDR not only led the attack against the Depression but guided the U.S. to victory in World War II.

Our 32nd President was a tough hombre. And a wise one.



<http://www.thepatrioticgentleman.com/TheGreatDepression/TheGreatDepression1.html>

SOUP LINE -- Many people lost not only their homes but their means of sustenance during the Great Depression like those, above, entering a line in a soup kitchen to eat. The Depression was an economic downturn which began with a stock market crash in 1929 that eventually spilled economic poisons over into other sectors of the economy (sound familiar?). At the height of economic hardship in 1932, one in every four Americans did not have a job.



Wikipedia

WASTELAND -- Several years after the Great Depression began, 1,000 foot high dust storms called black blizzards blanketed the Midwest, destroying 50 million acres of land and endangering another 50 million acres while the country was busy coping with already imposing economic woes. This one landed in Dallas, South Dakota on May 13, 1936, burying farm machinery in a barn lot, above. Over 2.5 million people fled the Dust Bowl area, moving mainly to California where they faced perils almost as disheartening as documented in John Steinbeck's great novel about the Okies, "The Grapes of Wrath."



courtesy of California State University, Sacramento. Library
Dept. of Special Collections and University Archives.



www.newdeal75.org

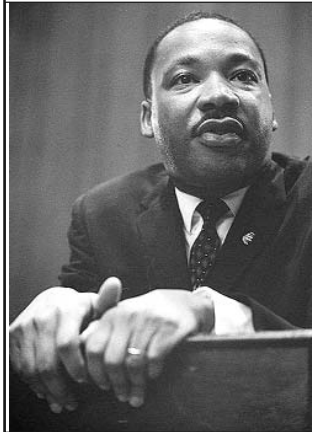
NEW DEAL -- President Franklin Delano Roosevelt signs the Social Security Act into law in 1935, left. At right, Roosevelt is depicted in a cartoon steering the United States through treacherous seas during the Great Depression. During the first 100 days of Roosevelt's first term starting in 1932, with the country already deep into an economic depression, the president and his supporters rammed many programs through Congress designed to combat economic ills. Most were abolished around 1943 but many survive even today. Among actions taken were a United States bank holiday closing all banks until certified by federal review, abandonment of the gold standard insuring gold no longer backed currency, the Civilian Conservation Corps or CCC that employed young men to perform unskilled work in rural areas, the Tennessee Valley Authority built dams to generate electricity on the Tennessee River, the National Recovery Act saw industries set up codes reducing unfair competition, Public Works Administration built large public works projects, the Securities Act of 1933 created the Securities Exchange Commission along with many more.



Wikipedia

REBUILDING AMERICA -- A public mural from an artist employed by the New Deal illustrates the spirit and idealism behind many programs launched by Roosevelt to counter hard times and build hope. William Gropper's "Construction of a Dam," painted in 1939, is representative of some art works sponsored by the Works Progress Administration during its existence. The Works Progress Administration (renamed the Work Projects Administration or WPA in 1939) was created by presidential order in 1935, continuing and expanding relief programs to about eight million people by 1943. WPA workers built public buildings, projects and roads, operated large arts, drama, media and literacy projects and also fed children, passing out food and clothing, and putting up housing. Almost every community in America had a park, bridge or school constructed by the agency - including Fort Dix.

Army joins nation in honoring King



wikipedia

AMERICAN PROPHET -- We commemorate the life of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. on Monday, Jan. 19, a national holiday. It's been 40 years since he was shot down at a Memphis motel. And this week, Barack Obama becomes the first African-American to be sworn in as President of the United States. We can only hope that Dr. King is taking it all in somewhere, content in the knowledge that trails he blazed have borne fruit.

King-sized ideas

"It is necessary to understand that Black Power is a cry of disappointment. The Black Power slogan did not spring full grown from the head of some philosophical Zeus. It was born from the wounds of despair and disappointment. It is a cry of daily hurt and persistent pain."

Where Do We Go From Here: Chaos or Community?, 1967

"Discrimination is a hellhound that gnaws at Negroes in every waking moment of their lives to remind them that the lie of their inferiority is accepted as truth in the society dominating them."

speech at Southern Christian Leadership Conference, Atlanta, 1967

Success, recognition, and conformity are the bywords of the modern world where everyone seems to crave the anesthetizing security of being identified with the majority.

Strength To Love, 1963

"We must combine the toughness of the serpent and the softness of the dove, a tough mind and a tender heart."

Strength To Love, 1963

the Post

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Post Commander Col. Ronald R. Thaxton

Public Affairs Officer/Editor Carolee Nisbet
PAO Automation/Admin Beverly Wakefield
PAO Media Relations Pascual J. Flores
PAO OpEd/Features Steve Snyder
PAO Community Relations Gerry Zanzalari
PAO Writer/Editor Jennifer McCarthy
PAO Writer/Editor Lisa Evans

Fort Dix Public Affairs Office Contract Workers
Jennifer Chupko, Wayne Cook, Ed Mingin, Ryan Morton

Iraq correspondents 1st. Sgt. David Moore, Staff Sgt. Shawn Morris both from 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT)

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Ryan Morton

Surprise ice and snow create road chaos

Flurries of snow Jan. 15 combined with falling temperatures to coat roads on Fort Dix with ice, causing more than a dozen accidents like this one at the Broidy Gate onto McGuire AFB. One person was transported to Virtua Memorial Hospital as a result of the accident, and three others sustained minor injuries in weather-related accidents in and around post. Road crews from the Directorate of Public Works sanded most streets by noon, and warmer afternoon temperatures helped clear main traffic lanes. Continued cold weather and more snow are forecast for next week. Any delays or changes in operating hours at Fort Dix will be posted on the Weather Hotline at 562-4065 by 6 a.m., and will also be listed on WDX Channel 2 TV for Comcast viewers and at www.dix.army.mil.

Tax warning: Don't get hooked by phishing scams this filing season

MOUNTAINSIDE, Jan. 12, 2009 — The IRS is warning the public to be aware of e-mail scams that fraudulently use the IRS name or Logo as a lure during this tax season.

The goal of the scam is to trick people into revealing personal and financial information, such as Social Security, bank account or credit card numbers, which the scammers can use to commit identity theft and steal your money.

"The IRS does not send unsolicited e-mails about a person's tax account or ask for detailed personal and financial information," said New Jersey's

IRS Spokesperson Gregg Semanick.

"Additionally, the IRS never asks people for the PIN numbers, passwords or similar secret access information for their credit card, bank or other financial accounts."

If you receive an e-mail from someone claiming to be the IRS, you can forward that e-mail to the IRS site.

- Do not reply.
- Do not open any attachments. Attachments may contain malicious code that will infect your computer.
- Do not click on any links. If you clicked on links in a sus-

picious e-mail or phishing Web site and entered confidential information, visit the Identity Theft page on IRS.gov.

"You can help shut down these schemes and prevent others from being victimized," said Semanick.

If you receive a suspicious e-mail that claims to come from the IRS, you can forward that e-mail to a special IRS mailbox, phishing@irs.gov.

The e-mail must be forwarded using special instructions at IRS.gov, or it loses the encoding needed to track it to its source.

The IRS can use the infor-

mation, URLs and links in the suspicious e-mails you forward to trace the hosting Web site and alert authorities to help shut down the fraudulent sites. After you forward the e-mail to the IRS, delete the message.

Remember that all of the web page addresses for the official IRS website, IRS.gov, begin with <http://www.irs.gov/>. Don't be confused or misled by internet sites that end in .com, .net, .org or other designations instead of .gov.

The address of the official IRS governmental Web site is www.irs.gov.

AudioNOTES boosts clinic, patient communications

Wayne Cook
Public Affairs Staff

The 305th Medical Group, McGuire Air Force Base, announced the implementation of a new communications system between medical providers and patients Jan. 9.

Representatives of AudioCARE Systems out of Berwyn, Pa. spent an hour going over the features and capabilities of AudioNOTES, a new telephone communications system, with more than 50 members of the Medical Group staff and other members of the base during an introductory briefing at the clinic.

"AudioCARE Systems is a provider of automated communications systems for health-care organizations which

streamlines communications between healthcare facilities, healthcare providers and patients."

"The company has longstanding relationships and works exclusively with the Department of Defense, Veterans' Administration, and Indian Health System," said Julia Stampone, systems training manager with AudioCARE.

AudioNOTES will offer a significantly higher level of patient care while measurably reducing operating costs for the clinic, according to Stampone.

The system allows providers to communicate information, instructions and normal test results to patients via their Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) compliant tele-

phone mailbox that only the patient can access.

"The system works by the doctor initiating a call to a patient via the system which assigns a mailbox to the patient's identification number. The doctor records the information in the system and the system calls the patient and notifies him or her that there is a message in their mailbox, giving them the number for the mailbox."

"When the patient calls the mailbox system for the first time they are prompted to assign a Personal Identification Number (PIN) for future access," said Stampone.

The system will be used by

the pharmacy and primary care providers to eliminate phone tag between care providers and patients.

This will save time for both patients and providers, as well as speeding needed information to people without the requirement for appointments and additional visits to clinics or the pharmacy for health care information.

According to Stampone, the system will be activated Jan. 20.

Any questions regarding the new system can be directed to Maj. Sara Myers, Health Care Integrator, 305th Medical Group, McGuire AFB, by calling 754-9717.

Progress in Iraq cited

(continued from page 1)

forces to be out of Iraq by the end of 2011.

That withdrawal has already begun, with one U.S. brigade combat team having left the

country during the period covered by the report.

Polish troops are ending their assignment in the nation, and troops from other nations — including Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Georgia, Japan, Kazakhstan, South Korea, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Moldova, Tonga and Ukraine — have completed their missions in the country.

Still, security gains in some areas of the country are fragile and reversible. For example, officials said, while overall deaths dropped, assassinations increased, and Iraq's Nineveh province and areas in Diyala

remain as problems.

Iran continues to pose a "significant threat" to Iraq, the report says.

"Despite persistent promises to the contrary, Iranian behavior continues to reflect a fundamental desire to oppose the development of a fully secure and stable Iraq," the report reads. "Countering malign influence and balancing soft Iranian influence remain priorities to stabilize Iraq and ensure the sovereignty of its people."

Iraqi security forces — while improving — need to work on what the military calls "combat enablers," officials noted. Coalition forces still provide

the Iraqi forces with logistics, fire support, communications, close-air support, planning and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance.

The gains in security allow the coalition to concentrate on infrastructure in the nation, officials said. The Iraqi economy grew by 9 percent in 2008, according to International Monetary Fund figures.

The 2008 Iraqi budget was \$72.1 billion. The government is investing in quality-of-life projects, and also is working to counter unemployment and under-employment in the nation, officials said.

Ukraine — have completed their missions in the country.

POLICE LOG

Police Log is a weekly synopsis of significant police activities developed from reports, complaints, incidents or information received and actions taken, for the week of Jan. 5 through 11.

The abbreviation DoD stands for Department of Defense; NAFD means Not Affiliated with Fort Dix (the subject doesn't live or work here); NCIC stands for National Crime Information Center; DWI means Driving While Intoxicated; CDS means Controlled Drug Substance; POV means Privately Owned Vehicle; MAFB stands for McGuire Air Force Base; USAF EC stands for US Air Force Expeditionary Center; AHCC stands for Ambulatory Health Care Clinic (MAFB); VMHBC stands for Virtua Memorial Hospital of Burlington County; CP# stands for Checkpoint Number.

●During a routine credential check of a vehicle attempting to enter the installation via CP#9 police discovered the vehicle operator, a civilian NAFD, had an outstanding warrant out of Camden County. The subject was transported to Burlington County Jail.

●Police and Fire Department personnel responded to a fire alarm at Bldg. 5275. Investigation revealed dust in the detector caused the alarm. A work order was placed.

●Police responded to a traffic accident near Bldg. 5635. Investigation revealed a government vehicle, operated by a Soldier assigned to Fort Dix, struck another vehicle. There were no reported injuries and the vehicles were released to the operators at the scene.

●Police responded to a motor vehicle crash on First Street at Delaware Avenue. Investigation revealed vehicle #1, operated by a civilian NAFD, failed to stop at the stop sign and was struck by vehicle #2. Further investigation revealed the second vehicle, operated by a Soldier assigned to Fort Dix, had expired registration and the operator could not provide a valid insurance card. There were no reported injuries. Both vehicles sustained disabling damage and were towed from the scene. The operator of vehicle #1 was cited for failure to yield at a stop sign, and the operator of vehicle #2 was cited for driving an unregistered vehicle and failure of possession of insurance identification.

●Police responded to a report of larceny of government property at Range #86. Investigation revealed person(s) unknown had removed chains and locks securing both the gate and CONEX boxes and had taken training aids. Investigation continues.

●Police and Fire Department responded to a fire alarm at Bldg. 5275. Investigation revealed workers had accidentally struck an overhead valve causing the alarm.

●During a routine traffic stop on Juliestown Road police discovered the vehicle operator, a Fort Dix civilian employee, had a suspended driver's license. The subject was cited and the vehicle released to a licensed driver.

●Police, Fire Department, and emergency medical personnel responded to a traffic accident near Bldg. 2203. Investigation revealed a vehicle operator, a civilian NAFD, pulled onto the shoulder of Fort Dix Road when he began to feel tired.

He did not have the vehicle in park, and he fell asleep. He accidentally pressed the accelerator and the vehicle lunged forward, striking the gate. He was treated at the scene by emergency medical personnel but declined further treatment. The vehicle sustained disabling damage and was towed from the scene.

●Police responded to a motor vehicle crash near Bldg. 5603. Investigation revealed a government vehicle, operated by a Soldier assigned to Fort Dix, struck another vehicle while backing from a parking space.

There were no reported injuries and the vehicles were released to the operators at the scene.

●While conducting a routine credential check of a vehicle attempting to enter the installation via the Main Gate, police discovered the vehicle, operated by a civilian NAFD, had expired registration. The subject was cited and the vehicle towed from the scene.

●Police responded to an incident near the Griffith Field House. Investigation revealed utility workers had inadvertently cut fiber optic cables. DOIM was notified to arrange for repairs.

●Police responded to a report of larceny of private property at Bldg. 5503. Investigation revealed that person(s) unknown had entered a secured room and taken property. Investigation continues.

●Police responded to a motor vehicle crash near Bldg. 5326. Investigation revealed a government bus, operated by a Fort Dix contract employee, struck another bus while parking.

There were no reported injuries and the vehicles were released to the operators at the scene.

●During a routine traffic stop on Juliestown Rd police discovered the vehicle, operated by a civilian NAFD, had expired registration and was uninsured. The subject was cited and the vehicle towed from the scene.

●There were four expired identification cards confiscated during the period.

●There were ten Magistrate Court Citations issued for moving violations. DWI incidents remain at one for the year.

Weather Hotline

When weather conditions cause a change in operations at Fort Dix, information on delays and closures will be posted on the Weather Hotline, 562-4065, by 6 a.m. each morning. Changes will also be posted on WDX, Channel 2 TV for Comcast viewers, and on www.dix.army.mil. Please do not call the police desk for information.

Anapa

Calvary

GoodYear

Freemasons donate calling cards

Sgt. William M. Zoeller
211th MPAD

When many people hear about Freemasons their minds begin to dazzle with images of secrecy and ritual. But what they may not know is that Freemasons have participated in many positive fundraising events that benefit the community and the military. The 56th Stryker Brigade Combat Team of the Pennsylvania National Guard, located in Philadelphia, is no exception to the tradition and history of the Freemasons.

The 56th SBCT received over 4,000 international calling cards from the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Pennsylvania January 13, 2009.

Grand Master Stephen Gardner, leader of the group, handed the calling cards to Col. Marc Ferraro, commander of the 56th SBCT.

The Freemasons have donated over \$156,000 to their "Change for the Troops" program since December 2008 in support of the U.S. Armed Forces heading to all regions of Iraq and Afghanistan.

"We were fortunate to honor you by giving each of the 4,000 Soldiers deploying a phone card," Gardner said to the Soldiers of the 56th SBCT present for the ceremony. "It's not enough of a measure of gratitude for all that you do."

Each Soldier will receive a telephone card with 300 prepaid minutes to keep in touch with their friends and families while deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Soldiers of the 56th SBCT have trained at Fort Polk, La. for their upcoming deployment and have not been able to communicate as often as they would like with their families.

The generous donation has increased the morale of the Soldiers by giving them the opportunity to call back for no

Gardner a Liberty Bell plaque from the unit. The Liberty Bell plaque and the unit's history date back to the Benjamin Franklin Association, Philadelphia's original militia. Ferraro also gave Gardner a unit coin.

For many in the unit and local area, the Freemasons are familiar. Among the group that was organized for the ceremony and exchange of items were fellow masons who were more than anxious to meet with Gardner. These Soldiers were given lapels to distribute to other brothers of the

Freemasons while in theater.

Maj. James Fluck, the brigade civil affairs officer, is one of many valued members of the 56th SBCT. He is also a mason that has lived in Pennsylvania his

entire life. He said that the generous donation is typical of Masonic lodges and that their support is greatly appreciated by his troops.

"Deployment is tough enough. The biggest complaint in the unit was the lack of communication back home," Fluck added. "The use of these cards will help the morale of the troops a lot!"

This will be the unit's first deployment to Iraq, but this isn't the first time the unit has been called on by the country to help in times of need. The unit was deployed to New Orleans on September 1, 2005, after Hurricane Katrina struck.

"Deployment is tough enough. The biggest complaint in the unit was the lack of communication back home. The use of these cards will help the morale of the troops a lot!"

-Maj. James Fluck

price to families and friends. Organizations such as the Freemasons have reassured the Soldiers that there are groups that support the troops during times of war, said Spc. Danielle Wilson, 56th SBCT.

It's great that we received the cards. We're not given the chance or availability to talk on the phones and it really helps financially, Wilson said. "It's good to know there are people out there looking out for us."

The 56th SBCT also has ties leading as far back as the American Revolution and the Freemasons. As a token of appreciation, Ferraro gave

Engineer Corps builds, troops train for war

Staff Sgt. Mark C. Burrell
211th MPAD

In the middle of the dense Fort Dix woods, a covered concrete maze stands beside a worn tank trail. Hanging from the metal pavilion enshrouding the maze are speakers, lights and an observation catwalk. The walls of the maze stand an intimidating 10-feet tall, ensuring Soldiers can't see what's around each treacherous corner. The "Shoothouse," or Urban Assault Course at range 58, is just one live-fire complex designed to simulate close-quarters combat for troops deploying to urban areas.

"Troops deploying to Iraq need this experience because there are buildings downrange that they need to clear room-to-room," said Frank C. Johnson, the site manager for the Urban Assault Course.

The Shoothouse opened two months ago to great success, continued Johnson. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers - Philadelphia District here, oversees military construction projects like this all the time. Over \$113 million has been allocated to Army Reserve projects on Fort Dix designed to improve Soldier living and training, said Fernando Angellelli Jr., the resident engineer at the Philadelphia District Office.

The Philadelphia District, like most USACE offices, is a dynamic agency that employs mostly civilians. The office has about 500 employees with only three being military, added Angellelli.

"Our job is to accept or reject contracts, enforce the contracts and make sure the contract is fulfilled along with providing quality assurance,"



Staff Sgt. Mark C. Burrell

BUILDING -- Raymond B. Richardson, a construction representative with the USACE, describes the capabilities of the Combined Arms Collective Training Facility set to open in early 2009.

said Angellelli. Though USACE builds the much-needed projects for Soldiers, it doesn't own the completed product. The Department of Works owns all the buildings, and range officers work closely with First Army to help give mobilizing Soldiers the best possible training.

"We know how useful and in demand these facilities are and they know how important these facilities are and it makes a difference," emphasized Angellelli.

One Corps of Engineers employee knows from experience how his job affects Army Reserve Soldiers, because he is one. Raymond B. Richardson, a construction representative from the Philadelphia District and a Master Sgt. in the Army

Reserve, mobilized through Fort Dix before heading overseas.

"Units were not really certified to go downrange before the War on Terror," Richardson explained. "These types of projects we are completing now are the same type of environments Soldiers will see when they head to Iraq. Soldiers appreciate that!"

Richardson, who has deployed to Kosovo, Qatar, Iraq and Liberia, knows what projects benefit Soldiers and gains satisfaction when they have the proper training environment.

"The Shoothouse is going to be a requirement for all deploying National Guard and Army Reserve units," exclaimed Johnson.

Not only do Soldiers glean experience from completing the Urban Assault Course, USACE has fitted the whole concrete maze with high-tech video monitoring and recording devices.

"They get to take a DVD back to their unit and sit there with their first sergeant, and whatever and see what they did," said an unnamed Johnson.

Though the Corps of Engineers is primarily a civilian organization, it understands the needs of the troops and the demand for realistic training environments for mobilizing National Guard and Army Reserve Soldiers.

"There's crying babies, barking dogs, a call to prayer, explosions - all the sounds you hear in war!" explained an enthusiastic Johnson.

The message that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers - Philadelphia District is sending to all mobilizing Soldiers is: If you're going to war, go train on buildings made by the Corps.

Sp. Jon Soles
211th MPAD

Not every Soldier's fight is on the battlefield. Some struggle, often silently, against the enemies of drug and alcohol addiction.

Soldiers who wage war against these enemies have an ally in the Army Substance Abuse Program at Fort Dix, which provides counseling and help.

Denise A. Horton, alcohol/drug control officer, heads up the Army Substance Abuse Program. Her job is to receive Soldiers who come to her office, provide counseling and make referrals for treatment. The program is designed to keep Soldiers, who might otherwise face separation from the Army because of substance

abuse problems, fit for duty.

"Our mission is to prevent, train and rehabilitate those who need help," Horton said. "If someone does need help, we try to help them get back to duty."

But the Army Substance Abuse Program did not reach its current ability to help Soldiers without clearing hurdles, according to Horton.

"The old paradigm about 'suck it up and drive on,' and 'there's no problem in this unit,' is long gone," Horton said. "Now we see senior leadership saying, 'Get the help you need.'"

The Army's Substance Abuse Program was created as the Vietnam War drew to a close. Horton said it was a time when drug and alcohol abuse among servicemembers were first recognized as problems

that needed to be addressed.

Horton said one misconception of ASAP is that it helps the Army remove Soldiers with drug or alcohol problems. In fact, ASAP helps maintain force strength by helping Soldiers break an addiction.

"This is not a clearing house," Horton said. "It still stands today as a manpower conservation program."

Counseling at ASAP is confidential, but a Soldier's commander is always informed. Once a Soldier decides to seek help at ASAP, a meeting is arranged with the ASAP rehabilitation team. The Soldier must also take a Bicycle Social Assessment, which is a written test evaluation, to determine the severity of their substance abuse problem.

Horton said there are three outcomes from a meeting: edu-



Sgt. William Zoeller

PRESENTATION -- Col. Marc Ferraro, commander of the 56th Stryker Brigade Combat Team from Philadelphia, Pa., hands Stephen Gardner, Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Pennsylvania, a Liberty Bell plaque as a token of thanks for their support of their Soldiers. The Freemasons donated over 4,000 prepaid international calling cards to the BCT and have donated over \$156,000 to the "Change for the Troops" program in support of U.S. servicemembers heading to Iraq and Afghanistan

Training unchanged in tri-service merger

Sgt. 1st Class Ron Burke
211th MPAD

A sharp, cold wind cuts into layers of clothing as Soldiers grip their 9 mm Beretta pistols, extend their arms and wait for their targets to pop up. Groups of four steadily move down the streets of "Balad," their weapons at the low ready, simultaneously scanning the tops of buildings and open windows as they prepare to enter a building. The next street over, another group of Soldiers provides a tight perimeter of security for its commander, who is shaking hands with the local sheikh after working out plans for new construction.

A few steps away from each of these training scenarios are one or two Soldiers who are observing, taking notes and stepping in to take advantage of a teachable moment. These Soldiers are the trainers, the combat veterans, the subject matter experts, and drill sergeants who make up the corps of Soldiers that run Regional Training Center-East (RTC-East) and First Army's multitude of training complexes.

Fort Dix is the largest mobilization station in the continental United States for Army Reserve and National Guard Soldiers and is one of four joint-mobilization sites.

More than 1,500 Soldiers, Sailors, and Airmen a month train here before heading to Iraq and Kuwait in support of the Global War on Terrorism.

Since Sept. 11, 2001, Fort Dix has trained more than 120,000 troops, Sailors and Airmen for state-side opera-



Sgt. 1st Class Ron Burke

MERGER -- Dix Commander Col. Ronald Thaxton said he doesn't expect missions to change as Fort Dix merges with McGuire Air Force Base and Lakehurst Naval Air Engineering Station.

tions and Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom. Col. Ronald Thaxton, the post commander, spoke about the state of training here at Fort Dix as it transitions to a joint-base complex with McGuire Air Force Base and Lakehurst Naval Air Engineering Station.

"Each base has its own requirements, yet our joint base is unique because we here at Fort Dix train and mobilize Soldiers while Lakehurst supports catapult launch and recovery operations and McGuire provides global mobility readiness and combat support," he said.

With a new Status of Forces Agreement in place in Iraq and a new administration entering the White House, Thaxton believes that his mission will not change in the near future.

"We will still train infantry, armor, and field artillery units. We will maintain the mission in combat service and combat service support," he said. "It's

possible that we could participate in more PRT (Provincial Reconstruction Team) training in order to support Operation Enduring Freedom."

With the complexities of a multi-service station, teamwork plays a large part in the housing, feeding, training, and ultimately, mobilizing Soldiers. Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen to fight the War on Terrorism. On Fort Dix, the RTC-East, First Army, and Thaxton and his staff team up to ensure that those complexities get smoothed out by the time a Soldier steps onto a firing range or stacks up with three other Soldiers during MOUT (Movement Operations in Urban Terrain) training so he or she gets the best training possible.

"We synch through coordination from my level down to the lowest level -- the trainer," said Thaxton. "We not only synch to train and support our war-fighters, we work to support our trainers and their families who live on and around post," he said.

"The families of our trainers and other active duty Soldiers and their quality of life here is just as important as the training that they provide," Thaxton added.

In the end, the efforts of these entities: Fort Dix, First Army, United States Army Reserve Command and RTC-East after hours, days of the White House, Thaxton believes that his mission will not change in the near future. "We will still train infantry, armor, and field artillery units. We will maintain the mission in combat service and combat service support," he said. "It's



Sp. Jon Soles

POSTER -- Fort Dix Elementary School student Joshua Fairlie created this poster for the Army Substance Abuse Program office on post to help raise awareness about drug and alcohol abuse. School children on post made posters with the theme "Drugs Bug Me" for ASAP.

NEIGHBORHOOD

THE CORNER

Tickets available for comedy show

Comedian and Fort Dix Apollo Night host, Capone, will perform at Club Dix on Jan. 16.

Also appearing that night will be "Big Jay" Oakerson. Both artists have made numerous television appearances including Comedy Central's Premium Blend and Tough Crowd with Colin Quinn, B.E.T.'s Comic View, and P. Diddy's Bad Boys of Comedy on HBO.

This show is a great chance to sit back, relax, laugh and de-stress with your friends.

Doors open at 7 p.m. and the show starts at 8 p.m.

Tickets are \$10 and are available at Club Dix or Family, Morale, Welfare, Recreation headquarters.

For more information call 723-3272.

Vacancies available at School Aged Services

Vacancies are available for children in grades one through six at School Aged Services.

Transportation is available to and from schools in the Pemberton School District and North Hanover School District. Call Central Enrollment Registry at 562-4702/5231 for more information and to register.

Popular games return to Dix

Back by popular demand, it is card night at Club Dix. Bunco and Texas Hold'em return to the Club Jan. 23. The doors open at 6 p.m. and the games begin at 7 p.m.

The registration fee for Bunco is \$7. The registration fee for Texas Hold'em is \$19 in advance or \$24 at the door.

For more information contact Bob Vogt at 562-6772.

Respite child care available for deployed military

Families of Deployed Military, under TCS Orders, PCS accompanied Tour Orders, TDY Status for 90-179 Days Orders, Rear Detachment Cadre in support of Soldiers, and Wounded Warriors or Fallen Warriors are eligible for many free and discounted services in Child Youth Services (CYS) respite child care, reduced full day care fees, free sports and instructional classes.

Please call 562-2242 for more information.

Free YMCA memberships available for Active Duty families

Active duty families at McGuire Air Force Base, Fort Dix and Lakehurst Naval Air Engineering Station are eligible for free YMCA memberships as part of a pilot program. Memberships will be issued on a first come, first served basis with 300 to 450 family memberships available. For more information, please visit <http://www.defenselink.mil/releases/release.aspx?releaseid=12259>

Credit education classes offered at Army Community Services

Learn more about how to manage your credit at the Army Community Services Financial Readiness Meetings, Jan. 28 from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Call 562-2767 for details.

Cage Fighting returns to Griffith Field House

Cage Fighting returns to Griffith Field House Feb. 21. Tickets are \$20 in advance and \$40 at the door. Tickets may be purchased at the Family, Morale, Welfare, Recreation Headquarters located at 6043 Doughboy Loop. For more information call 562-6772.

Alcoholics Anonymous meetings held weekly

Alcoholics Anonymous meetings are held every Thursday at 7 p.m. at the Main Chapel, in the lounge near the Fellowship Hall. Anyone attending should use the 8th Street parking lot entrance. All other doors will be closed. For more information call 562-4011 or 562-2658.

Family gives Red Cross boost



Wayne Cook

HELPING HANDS — Retired Navy Capt. John Ulrich and his wife, Mid, show some of the comfort kit items they delivered to the American Red Cross Fort Dix Station Jan. 13. Their daughter, Jane Murray, a teacher at Kingsway Learning Center's Elementary Program in Haddonfield, organized the donation drive with other staff members and students to provide needed items for deploying and returning Soldiers.

Wayne Cook Public Affairs Staff

Long-time Army Community Services (ACS) volunteers, retired Navy Capt. John Ulrich and his wife, Mid, of Cherry Hill, delivered seven boxes of donated comfort kit items to the American Red Cross Fort Dix Station Jan. 13.

The Ulrichs volunteering on the post is not news to many who know them. So it really is not a big surprise to find out that the spirit of volunteering and helping others has passed on to their daughter Jane Murray, a teacher at Kingsway Learning Center's Elementary Program in Haddonfield.

When the Ulrichs volunteered at the American Red Cross last fall during the ACS Day of Caring they took notice that quite a few comfort kit items were either low or out of stock. Being the conscientious people that they are they decided to do something about it.

"We spoke to Jane about the need for donated items for deploying and returning military members at Fort Dix. She

started with presenting it to her class students and soon other staff members at the school jumped onboard. One staff member's husband is an Army officer who has served two tours in Iraq, so she knows what they can use. They were able to collect all kinds of hygiene and snack items for the troops. We're very proud of Jane and all the kids and staff members at the school," said John.

The items that were collected will go a long way to helping replenish the stock at the Red Cross station but much more is needed.

"I really appreciate the Ulrichs and all of our volunteers who help us out. They see a need and they step up and help out. It helps us take care of the troops which is our number one priority," said Patricia Selk-Welkenbach, volunteer manager at the Fort Dix American Red Cross Station.

Donations are always welcome at the station as are volunteers to help organize the donations. For a list of items needed or to volunteer time and energy call Patricia Selk-Welkenbach at 562-2258.

Historic play on menu at Club Dix

Jennifer M. McCarthy Public Affairs Staff

Actor, artist and historian, Bob Sneed, will bring his unique one-man, one-act play to Club Dix Jan. 29. "Held in Trust" tells the story of Henry Ossian Flipper, the first black graduate of the United States Military Academy at West Point. This not-to-be-missed dinner theater experience begins at 5 p.m. The show follows at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$19 for adults and \$12 for children 12 years-old and under. Tickets may be purchased at Family, Morale, Welfare and Recreation Headquarters located at 6043 Doughboy Loop or at Club Dix.

Sneed, a retired Army aviator, has a long history of achievements in the Arts. He is an accomplished artist as well as playwright. An exhibit of his paintings, "A Hundred Years Ago, The Buffalo Soldier Revisited," has traveled extensively throughout the United States, the Virgin Islands, Europe, and Africa. In November 1999, Sneed was inducted into the El Paso International Hall of Fame for Visual Arts and in 2004, he was appointed to the Texas Commission for the Arts for a term of six years.

Sneed's work has also garnered educational honors. His play, "Held in Trust" was adapted for the small screen with a made-for-television movie for PBS in 1995. The movie was awarded a "Bronze Apple Award" for educational excellence. "Held in Trust" follows the life and times of Henry Ossian Flipper.

Flipper was the first black Cadet to graduate from West Point. Born into slavery, in 1856, Flipper spent his formative years in Georgia. In 1873 he was appointed to the United States Military Academy and in 1877 graduated. He was commissioned a second lieutenant and assigned to the 10th Cavalry. He served at various duty stations across the Southwest where he worked as a scout as well as post engineer surveyor and construction supervisor, post quartermaster and commissary officer. In 1881, while serving as commissary officer in Texas, he was charged with embezzling funds and conduct unbecoming an officer and gentleman. As a result, he was court-martialed. While he was eventually acquitted of the embezzlement charge, he was found guilty of conduct unbecoming an officer and was dismissed from the Army.

Flipper spent the remainder of his life serving his country as a civilian by working in a variety of civil and government engineering projects. He also served as aide to the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations and special assistant to the Secretary of the Interior with the Alaskan Engineering Commission.

He maintained his innocence of the charges that robbed him of his commission throughout his life and fought to have the decision reversed until his death in 1940.

On Feb. 19, 1909, President Bill Clinton granted Flipper a full pardon. He acknowledged Flipper's accomplishments and that his treatment had been unjust.



historic photo

BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS— On Jan. 29, Club Dix will host a special dinner theater presentation of "Held in Trust," a one-man, one-act play by Bob Sneed about the life and times of Henry Ossian Flipper, above. Flipper was the first black graduate of the United States Military Academy at West Point in 1877. Tickets to the show are \$19 for adults and \$12 for children 12 years-old and younger. For more information call 562-5355.

New website lets Soldiers see, share

Jennifer Chupko Public Affairs Staff

New media is now available for our nations finest with the opportunity to keep in touch with friends and loved ones with a blogging and video-sharing online network, while mobilized.

TroopTube, an interactive website, created by the United States government, is a military internet community comparable to the popular Youtube or Myspace.

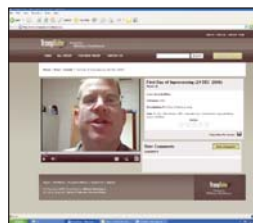
In May 2007, the Department of Defense banned employees and Soldiers from accessing video-sharing sites citing security and bandwidth issues. In response, TroopTube was created in partnership with a Seattle, Washington-based startup, Delve Networks, and Marion, Montgomery, Inc., a marketing and interactive agency.

TroopTube, powered by Military Onesource, was launched November 2008 for all of the branches of the armed forces, family and civilian Defense Department employees. Those allowed sharing videos, blogs and online diaries are now known as milbloggers.

"TroopTube is the new online video site designed to help military families connect and keep in touch while miles apart," read a statement on the homepage at TroopTube.tv. An estimated four million people have already taken to the website.

Videos on TroopTube can be viewed by any visitor, but registration is required to upload material to the site. All of the submitted videos are screened by the Pentagon and must fall within accepted boundaries of community standards and safety to be posted.

"Information is the currency here in the 21st Century," said Commanding Gen. of the United States Army William Caldwell on a welcoming video on TroopTube. "The proliferation of easy-to-use open-source software has made it possible for



courtesy photo

LOOK AT YOU NOW — TroopTube is a government sponsored video-sharing site that offers Soldiers, family members and Department of Defense employees a place to share their experiences on-line.

nearly everyone with access to the Internet to become their own publisher. As the mainstream media has increasingly devoted its resources to the political arena, you out there—the milbloggers, you are out there telling the military story."

Another video on the homepage is a tribute to the troops from Gen. David Petraeus, the new commander of Central Command, for their "tremendous work" in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere.

"I think it is a real resource for families," said Lt. Col. Howie Rietz, Headquarters, Headquarters Company, 450th Civil Affairs, now stationed at Fort Dix and mobilized with orders to be sent to Iraq. "I send videos to my wife and two sons and will continue to do so overseas."

Over the holidays, many milbloggers also sent

video messages with wishes of well-being, love and support, including President Bush, who posted a holiday message to all military members and their families.

"Many of you are spending this holiday season far from home, but you are close in our thoughts and prayers" said Bush. "In this dangerous time, I thank you for making the world freer, our country safer and all Americans prouder."

TroopTube gives milbloggers a way of sharing milestones, holidays and birthdays while mobilized, and sharing videos puts that extra personal touch to written messages.

"There are many occasions that I won't have to miss out on with TroopTube," said Rietz. "I will be able to celebrate my sons' birthdays and especially Valentine's Day for my wife."

System requirements to post and view videos include:

- Operating Systems
 - Windows 2000
 - Windows XP
 - Windows Vista (including recent service packs)
 - Mac OS X 10.3 or higher
 - Browsers
 - Internet Explorer 5.0+
 - Firefox 1.1+
 - Safari 1.0+
 - Google Chrome 1.0+
 - Media Players
 - Adobe Flash Version 9.115
 - Internet Connection
 - Broadband connection with 500+ Kbps
- To access TroopTube, visit www.MilitaryOneSource.com and click on the TroopTube link. Once on the site, you will be required to register in order to view or post videos.
- During the registration process, you will be asked to identify your e-mail address, name, and service branch or affiliation.

Intern launches career in logistics

Ryan Morton
Public Affairs Staff

Eric Hogg, a May 2008 graduate from the University of Delaware with a bachelor's degree in business management, is currently at Fort Dix participating in the Logistics Management Intern Program.

For the 22-year-old, loading pallets to send overseas is just part of the learning experience to reach his goal of becoming a logistics management specialist. It's a two year paid internship consisting of classroom education and on-the-job training in fields such as transportation, supply, maintenance, financial management, contract negotiations, and leadership development.

"When I heard about this program it sounded like a great opportunity and better than sit-

ting and working in a typical office like most places," said Hogg, a Lancaster, Pa. native.

Upon completion of the program, after two years, Hogg will be placed as a Logistics Management Specialist and move from where he is now as a Government Service (GS) 7 to a GS 11. After the first 12 months in the program he will advance to a GS 9 before reaching GS 11 status after satisfactory completion.

Hogg arrived at the installation during the first week of January and will train here for three months. Previously he spent five months in the classroom at Fort Lee, Va., where he will return for more classroom training when he completes the on-the-job training phase at Dix.

This is an experience Hogg would recommend to anyone coming out of school just

entering the working world. "This is great because it gives you the hands-on experience and offers the upward career mobility. It's a program that sets you up really nicely," said Hogg.

The qualifications for the program are a bachelor's degree with a 2.95 cumulative GPA or higher on a 4.0 scale or a top 30% ranking in your class of undergraduate studies. All majors are up for consideration and the applicant must be mobile and be a U.S. citizen.

The federal benefits are there, also, such as worldwide career opportunities, health and life insurance, annual and sick leave, paid holidays, an optional employer matched retirement fund with tax-deferred savings, a federal retirement plan, graduate-level tuition assistance, and training opportunities.



Ryan Morton

CAREER LAUNCHING -- Eric Hogg, participant in the Logistics Management Internship Program, tightens a strap on a pallet of materials to be shipped overseas at the logistics warehouse, Jan. 12. Hogg started working at Fort Dix last week and will be at the installation for three months performing on-the-job training as part of the program.

Sunshine Soldiers survive cold blast

Lisa Evans
Public Affairs Staff

Through rain and cold, the 351st Military Police Company out of Ocala, Fla., slogged through Fort Dix's ankle-deep sand to complete its Police Transition Training exercises Jan. 7.

Since they arrived at Fort Dix, there has been little sunshine for the southern Reserve Soldiers. While learning how to fire non-lethal paint balls in a riot control exercise Jan. 6, Soldiers fired through a drizzle at paint-splattered targets posed in a detention area.

The following day, trainers from First Army reminded Soldiers to watch in the woods for poisonous plants such as poison ivy, poison sumac and poison oak.

Sergeant 1st Class Glenn Glasgow, who led the Soldiers through their training, said he joined the Army because his mother said she could not afford to send him to school. So, at the age of 16, between his junior and senior years of high school, Glasgow joined the military and attended basic training.

He entered the military immediately after leaving high school and has stayed with it for the past 10 years. He is deploying on his second tour of duty to Iraq.

As a civilian, he is a fireman half-way through paramedic training.

He has earned a bachelor's degree in business administration with a double minor in sociology and economics, and will begin his master's in business administration upon his return from Iraq.

Glasgow said during training, Glasgow said that he was extremely pleased with the Soldiers in his unit because they showed such willingness to learn.

Soldiers, munching on cold MREs (meals ready to eat), leaned against buildings or stood under trees to avoid some of the moisture. But in spite of the cold and rain this group of Soldiers was upbeat and eager. They laughed a lot and smiled at the American and Arabic role players. Role players responded with pleasure and eagerness to join in the training.

Arabic role players taught Soldiers the art of working with Iraqi officials. Sitting in a 'police station' and speaking through an interpreter, Soldiers learned how to talk with officials and answer requests for weapons, training, supplies and support.

Sipping on cups of 'chai' or tea, trying to read Arabic lists of needs, listening to the interpreter, and working around interruptions, Soldiers made notes of requests and promised

to send them up the chain of command. Michael Hedow, an Iraqi role player, thanked the Soldiers when they got it right and argued when they didn't. Later, Soldiers marched a mile or so through puddles and woods to reach training sites to train "Iraqi police" in basic search and policing skills.

Role players used mostly Arabic phrases to communicate, but the Soldiers were able to show them how to approach a building safely, pass open windows, and enter doors where there may be enemy forces within.

Participating in non-lethal self-defense training, Pfc. Parker Tobin said he joined because he has a military family. This 20-year-old Clarksville, Tenn. native was attached to the 351st because his basic training and advanced individual training in March 2008 was with the 351st while they were in California. The battalion had some empty spots to fill and he was chosen.

"I am excited. My brother went to Iraq and had a lot of knowledge about the people of Iraq. They're people, too, just like us. I just want to go into the culture and get to know the people. I just want to know it's a team effort and want to speak for everybody," he said.

Tobin said his father was in the Army and went to Iraq during the Gulf War and his brother



photos by Lisa Evans

LOCK AND LUMBER -- Sgt. Jared Ramsey, 351st MP Co., uses a piece of wood to "teach" civilians on the battlefield how to handle, load, and carry a weapon during a mobilization readiness exercise Jan. 13. The unit from the Sunshine State had to endure bitter cold and rain.

er was in Iraq during Operation Iraqi Freedom. His two sisters are on Active Duty, one at Fort Polk and one at Fort Hood.

He has always wanted to be in the Army since he was a little kid. He has enrolled in school and wants to major in criminal justice and homeland security as part of his military

career.

But right now, Tobin is focused on doing his best to help his fellow Soldiers.

"I make everyone laugh in my platoon," he said seriously. "I try to build character. It's going to be a very long year and I want to make it fun for everyone. The group of guys I

work with are really motivated - really squared away. They're really trained. Everyone is nervous and excited. I hope when we turn it over to the Iraqis that we leave a real stable Iraq. I want to make a friend, have acquaintances, but stay alert, stay alive, keep my buddies alive," Tobin mused.

Room dedicated in memory of fallen Soldier

Jennifer Chupko
Public Affairs Staff

Members of the Fort Dix Military Entrance Processing Station (MEPS) honored fallen Soldier Cpl. Steven R. Koch, 1st Battalion, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, with a dedication of the Ceremony Room Jan. 14. Koch was killed March 3, 2008 in the line of duty while serving in Afghanistan. Fifteen family

members attended, while the room was packed with friends of Koch.

Koch joined the Army Feb. 2006 at Fort Dix, in response to the World Trade Center bombings, in the ceremony room that is now dedicated to him. It was a touching moment for Koch's mother Christine, sister Lynn and father Bill, who drove from New Brunswick for the ceremony.

"Cpl. Koch took his oath in this room and it stands as a testament to all the men and women who will pass through

here," said United States Air Force Maj. Jerry M. Brooks, commander, Fort Dix Military Entrance Processing Station.

Koch was killed during an Improvised Explosive Devices (IED) truck attack. The entire platoon was wounded when the building the unit was patrolling blew up.

"He was always willing to help anyone in need," said his mother. "He told me that he would bleed on the American flag to keep the stripes red."

The members of Koch's unit attended the room dedica-

tion. First Lt. Nelson D'Antonio spoke on behalf of the unit.

"We are proud that he was a member of our team - he was a brother to us," said D'Antonio. "No matter what we needed, he did the best he could and would always be there for us."

His mother agreed, adding that the New Brunswick native was full of life.

"Everything and anything he did was with some effort, so much love. He believed in everything he did and never backed down from anything,"

she said "We must never forget that freedom is not always free."

"This day reminds me of the history Cpl. Koch has left us and the legacy of him that will live with us," said Col. Barry Price, commander of Eastern Sector, United States Military Entrance Processing Command.

The ceremony included the "Arlington National Cemetery" song by Trace Adkins. The song was a tribute to where Koch was laid to rest.

There was not a dry eye in the room.

Staff Sgt. Jacqueline Stewart was full of emotion and tears as she sat with Koch's family members. She was his recruiter from the East Brunswick United States Recruiting Office.

The end of the ceremony included a poem written by his mother before the unveiling of the dedication plaque that is now hung in the same room where he became an Army Soldier.

FOREVER REMEMBERED -- Cpl. Steven R. Koch, Combat Logistics Battalion explosive Ordnance Technician, was killed in action when a vehicle borne improvised explosive device in a truck blew up the building he was patrolling in Afghanistan March 3, 2008. Many family members and friends attended the ceremony which took place in the same building where he entered the Army. Koch processed through Fort Dix's Military Entrance Processing Station in 2006. His awards and medals include the Bronze Star, Purple Heart, Army Commendation Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal, Army Good Conduct Medal, War on Terrorism Medal, NATO Medal and New Jersey Service Commendation Medal. The Ceremony Room is dedicated in honor of his service as an Army Soldier.

Jennifer Chupko



Wayne Cook

Military Police moving out

Capt. James Rodgers, commander, and 1st Sgt. Harold Cook, 269th Military Police Company, Tennessee National Guard, display their unit's Yellow Banner during a ceremony at Doughboy Gym Jan. 9. The unit, comprised of 165 Soldiers, hails from Murfreesboro and is headed to Iraq to conduct Police Transition Training with Iraqi police.

Ensure safe drinking water, stop pollution

Solutions to Stormwater Pollution

Easy Things You Can Do Every Day To Protect Our Water

A Guide to Healthy Habits for Cleaner Water

Pollution on streets, parking lots and lawns is washed by rain into storm drains, then directly to our drinking water supplies and the ocean and lakes our children play in. Fertilizer, oil, pesticides, detergents, pet waste, grass clippings: You name it and it ends up in our water.

Stormwater pollution is one of New Jersey's greatest threats to clean and plentiful water, and that's why we're all doing something about it.

By sharing the responsibility and making small, easy changes in our daily lives, we can keep common pollutants out of stormwater. It all adds up to cleaner water, and it saves the high cost of cleaning up once it's dirty.

As part of New Jersey's initiative to keep our water clean and plentiful and to meet federal requirements, many municipalities and other public agencies including colleges and military bases must adopt ordinances or other rules prohibiting various activities that contribute to stormwater pollution. Breaking these rules can result in fines or other penalties.



As a resident, business, or other member of the New Jersey community, it is important to know these easy things you can do every day to protect our water.

Limit your use of fertilizers and pesticides

- Do a soil test to see if you need a fertilizer.
- Do not apply fertilizers if heavy rain is predicted.
- Look into alternatives for pesticides.
- Maintain a small lawn and keep the rest of your property or yard in a natural state with trees and other native vegetation that requires little or no fertilizer.
- If you use fertilizers and pesticides, follow the instructions on the label on how to correctly apply it.



Make sure you properly store or discard any unused portions.

Properly use and dispose of hazardous products

- Hazardous products include some household or commercial cleaning products, lawn and garden care products, motor oil, antifreeze, and paints.
- Do not pour any hazardous products down a storm drain because storm drains are usually connected to local waterbodies and the water is not treated.

- If you have hazardous products in your home or workplace, make sure you store or dispose of them properly. Read the label for guidance.
- Use natural or less toxic alternatives when possible.
- Recycle used motor oil.
- Contact your municipality, county or facility management office for the locations of hazardous-waste disposal facilities.



Keep pollution out of storm drains

- Municipalities and many other public agencies are required to mark certain storm drain inlets with messages reminding people that storm drains are connected to local waterbodies.
- Do not let sewage or other wastes flow into a stormwater system.

Clean up after your pet

- Many municipalities and public agencies must enact and enforce local pet-waste rules.
- An example is requiring pet owners or their keepers to pick up and properly dispose of pet waste dropped on public or other people's property.
- Make sure you know your town's or agency's requirements and comply with them. It's the law. And remember to:
 - Use newspaper, bags or pooper-scoopers to pick up wastes.
 - Dispose of the wrapped pet waste in the trash or un-wrapped in a toilet.
 - Never discard pet waste in a storm drain.



Don't litter

- Place litter in trash receptacles.
- Recycle. Recycle. Recycle.
- Participate in community cleanups.

Dispose of yard waste properly

- Keep leaves and grass out of storm drains.
- If your municipality or agency has yard waste collection rules, follow them.
- Use leaves and grass clippings as a resource for compost.
- Use a mulching mower that recycles grass clippings into the lawn.



Contact information

For more information on stormwater related topics, visit www.njstormwater.org or www.norpointsource.org. Additional information is also available at U. S. Environmental Protection Agency Web sites www.epa.gov/npdes/stormwater or www.epa.gov/npdes. New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Division of Water Quality Bureau of Nonpoint Pollution Control Municipal Stormwater Regulation Program (609) 633-7021



www.cleanwater.nj.org



Army Community Service (ACS)

562-2767

Bldg. 5201, on the corner of 8th Street and Maryland Avenue

Hours of Operation:

Monday through Friday, 7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

*A Department of the Army Accredited Soldier and Family Service Organization

Looking for information and assistance? ACS is here to serve you. ACS serves all military branches of service, DoD civilian personnel and retirees. The ACS Center is accessible to individuals with disabilities.

FORT DIX WANTS YOU



MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Fort Dix is looking for interested residents who would like to volunteer

"Fort Dix volunteers improve the quality of life for all residents"

For those residents who want to make sure the Fort Dix community is the best it can be please

Call Army Community Service at 562-2767

Schopp retires after 41 years of federal service

Dix's budget czar managed money to master missions



Steve Snyder
Public Affairs Staff

For over 40 years John H. Schopp has bounced around United States military installations, impressing one and all with his financial acumen, dedication to duty and baritone bonhomie. All that ends this month with his retirement, formalized at a luncheon at Club Dix Jan. 27, officially marking the end of 31 years in the civil service and another 10 with the U.S. Army.

It's been a long haul for a child of the Midwest who probably never dreamed he'd see that much of the world. But he has and it's been quite a trip - both for him and those he's dealt with.

"Jay has been an integral part of the history, success and personality of Fort Dix," says Stephen Melly, deputy to Fort Dix's commander and chief of Public Safety.

According to Melly, "He (Jay) is an individual who speaks his mind and defends his points of view emphatically. He thrives on a challenge and never walks away from a difficult task until it is complete."

"Jay will be sorely missed for his tenacity, his knowledge and his love for Fort Dix."

"Jay is truly an icon," Melly concludes.

The Director of the Office of Information Management (DOIM), Richard Eckstein, seconds that fulsome praise.

"I have known Jay Schopp for over 25 years and in that time he has managed and moved money like a champ to accomplish the mission," Eckstein relates. "His recommendations on the 'how to do' in the financial [realm] were always on the money (to use a bad pun). Commanders disregarded his recommendations at their peril."

"He was all about the mission and the Soldier and he will be missed," Eckstein emphasizes.

"A tremendous amount of knowledge is departing Fort Dix with the retirement of Jay Schopp," thinks Kathleen Ochipinti, budget officer for the Directorate of Resource Management.

"He has been a terrific mentor to me, as well as many other employees," Ochipinti confides. "He will be truly missed."

John H. Schopp was born on June 8, 1943 in Springfield, Mo. He graduated from St. Agnes High School there in 1961 after working hard during his teen years mowing lawns, clerking at a grocery store and selling shoes.

"I was mainly interested in money, clothes and girls," he says, recalling school days. The personable youth attended Southwest Missouri State University with about 3,000 other students (now called simply Missouri State University with an enrollment of approximately 30,000) and graduated in 1965 with a BS in accounting and a minor in economics.

Schopp joined the Reserve Officer Training Corps



Steve Snyder

Jay Schopp
Director of Resource Management
Fort Dix

(ROTC) while in college and it was off to the Army at graduation.

After attending basic training for finance officers at idyllic Fort Benjamin Harrison in Indianapolis, Schopp tackled his first assignment in the Army at Fort Sill, Okla.

From June 1966 until May 1968, 1st Lt. Schopp commanded a tactical finance unit that supported 1,200 military and 4,000 payments monthly while in-processing an average of about 1,000 Soldiers weekly. He recalls that it was a challenge maintaining tactical readiness in his unit geared toward a 72 hour deployable basis.

From May 1968 to May 1969, Schopp served as budget officer for the USA Engineering Construction Agency working in close coordination with officials from the Republic of Vietnam. Schopp arrived in war-torn Vietnam about five months after the famous TET offensive took place. He formed some interesting perspectives about the Vietnamese and their Americanized experience.

Schopp found our allies to be hardworking, industrious and patriotic to the max. He was taken aback, a little, by most Vietnamese citizen's obsession with their country's history.

"One officer asked me, 'How many countries haven't changed their borders in 3,000 years?'" he recalled.

A reservist before, Schopp joined the Regular Army while stationed in Vietnam.

Capt. Schopp's next assignment sent him to the Oakland, Calif., Army Base from June 1969 to August 1970 where he worked mostly with civilians to execute Navy shipments, many going to Okinawa, and where he was instrumental in switching financial shipments from sea-going vessels to airplanes thereby saving much money and time.

And then Okinawa, his favorite location among all his tours of duty. Serving in the USA Financial Services Center in Okinawa, Schopp took over as payroll chief and found plenty of time to indulge in his latest passion - scuba diving. The island, 62 miles long and 12 miles wide in most places, provided a stunning backdrop for his new hobby.

Schopp says he liked the fact that the island had both a developed military community along with an attractive civilian sphere. He took advantage



photo courtesy of Dee Perez

TOURING PHILLY -- Schopp leads Resource Management Office employees on a "Ride the Duck" boat orientation tour of Philadelphia via the Delaware River.



photo courtesy of Dee Perez

EXPERIENCE EQUALS EXPERTISE -- Schopp never hesitated to reward excellence and at RMO opportunities to do so were frequent. Above he stands with a quartet of workers displaying service awards totaling more than a century of service to the government. Flanking Schopp, l-r, are Sharon Valdes, Beverly Sills, Thomas Konetski and Diane Robinson.



photo courtesy of Jay Schopp

A MAN FOR ALL SEASONS -- Schopp fondles a camera in Bar Harbor, Maine, in 1981 at far left. In the middle, he attempts to get into the spirit of a boat tour of Philadelphia called "Ride the Duck" by biting a rubber ducky. On the right, a student at Southwest Missouri State University (now simply Missouri State University) looks yonder in 1965, perhaps surveying worlds to conquer.



photo courtesy of Dee Perez



photo courtesy of Jay Schopp

Dix a lot in his next assignment as a budget analyst with HQ, 78th Div., at Edison from January 1978 through May 1979.

In May 1979 he became a budget analyst at DRC on Fort Dix, managing funds totaling \$40 million supporting units spread out over a three-state area. He became budget officer at that time, a position he held until October 1986 when he stepped up to become the supervising budget analyst at RMO. From August 1991 to September 1992, it was Deputy DRM Schopp until he reached his present position of budget officer.

Schopp vividly recalls working with Dix command Maj. Gen. James W. Wurman (in the late 1980s) and Col. Michael L. Warner (1992-1994), both who fought furiously to save the post from cuts coming down in various RIFs over the years.

He specifically remembers Wurman taking on the brass and adding so many tenants on post (like the Federal Correctional Institution) that Fort Dix became a tough target to foreclose.

Schopp has no grandiose plans for his retirement years, saying he intends just to keep busy on household projects at his home in Toms River and spend time with his grandchildren.

He'll be close enough to keep in touch with friends on Fort Dix and follow the path of progress he did so much to initiate over the years.

Team Dix salutes one of its legends.

Maguire Chevrolet



photo courtesy of Jay Schopp



photo courtesy of Jay Schopp

MILITARY MAN -- At left, Capt. Jay Schopp stands tall for his official military portrait taken in 1968 in Vietnam. Schopp served as budget officer for the USA Construction Agency, Republic of Vietnam, at Long Binh (about 25 miles north of Saigon). He says he found the Vietnamese to be hardworking, industrious, and patriotic. And they all seemed very aware of their country's history. "How many countries don't change their borders in 3,000 years?" one RVN officer asked him. On the right, an officer, left, congratulates Schopp for graduating from an internal review course in Atlanta in August 1978.

Hanover Dental

SPORTS

Dix skiers not hitting slopes this season

Jennifer Chupko
Public Affairs Staff

Is it possibly too nice out to go skiing? There have been two Fort Dix Family, Morale, Welfare and Recreation (FMWR) Outdoor Recreation ski trips cancelled this year because there just aren't any anxious skiers.

"In past years, there were a lot of people interested, especially Soldiers in units that wanted to go together," said Recreation Specialist David Bertagnoli. "This year, it hasn't snowed here so nobody is in the skiing spirit."

Outdoor Recreation has both day and weekend ski trips available to anyone eligible to use FMWR facilities. Proper identification may be required by staff for the FMWR participation.

There are both day and weekend ski trips. FMWR hits the day trip slopes at Bear

Creek or Blue Mountain, in Pennsylvania. The weekend trips are three hours north to West Point in New York.

Ski day trips leave the Outdoor Recreation, Bldg. 6045 Doughboy Loop, on Saturdays around noon and return the same day around midnight for \$75. This price includes a group lesson, equipment rental and transportation.

However, if you do not need a ski lesson, take \$12 off and if you have your own equipment, subtract \$8. For those who are looking for a wintry slip and slide, tubing is also available for \$30.

"The day trips are nice because we can reserve as many vans as needed," said Bertagnoli. "We don't turn any skiers away and it is always a good time."

The weekend trips to West Point have an itinerary that starts with a bus ride leaving Outdoor Recreation on Fridays at 5:15 p.m. Skiers stay at the

Five Start Inn adjacent to West Point. The cost for four people is \$200 or \$100 for individuals.

"I don't know why people aren't signing up," said Bertagnoli. "The snow is there and the skiing weather is beautiful."

Skiing day trips to Blue Mountain are Jan. 24, March 7 and 21. Trips to Bear Creek are Feb. 7 and 28, and March 14. West Point has two more trips: Feb. 13 through the 14, and 20 through 21.

"The West Point trips have a lot of activities provided by MWR," said Bertagnoli. "There was food service, ice sculpting, activities and crafts for kids and a pig roast last year."

Preregistration is required for all trips by calling Outdoor Recreation at 562-6667 or stop by Bldg. 6045.

Reservations for trip should be made by the Wednesday before the departure date.



courtesy photo

DOWNHILL DILEMMA -- Outdoor Recreation offers ski trips to Pennsylvania and New York, but not many people are participating. Several scheduled trips have been cancelled this year, but there are several more being offered. Call 562-6667 for more information.

Hit the slopes with Fort Dix Outdoor Recreation!
Whether it's your first time on the slopes, or a Military Family looking for a weekend getaway, we have just what your looking for!

One Day Trips/Ski & Board

Bear Creek - Macungie, PA
January 10
February 7
February 28
March 14

Blue Mountain - Palmerton, PA
January 24
March 7
March 21

Price: \$75
(includes group lesson, equipment, and transportation)

Bear Creek Trips meet at Outdoor Rec at 1pm and depart 1:30pm
Return approximately at midnight

Blue Mountain Trips meet at 12:45pm and depart 1:15pm
Return at approximately 12:30am.

Price Variations to base cost of Trip

\$16 if you don't want a lesson
\$8 if you bring your own equipment
-\$8 if you plan to provide your own transportation-\$8
Add \$10 if you want to Snowboard or Snowtubing
Add \$25 to add tubing to your trip.
Tubing only - \$30

For additional information, or to make reservations, call (609) 562-6667, or stop by Outdoor Recreation at Bldg. 6045 Mountain, West Point.

Skiing & Snowboarding Trips

Sports Shorts

Griffith Field House

Saturday & Sunday
9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Monday - Friday
6 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Free event for all military members

UFC legend and Hall of Famer Royce Gracie will be headlining the Allies Inc. WINTER-PALOOZA fundraiser Jan. 29, 2009 at 6

p.m. at KatManDu, the popular restaurant / club on the waterfront in Trenton.

Royce's appearance will help raise money for Allies Inc. - a registered and accredited nonprofit company that serves 2,000 people with various disabilities throughout New Jersey.

Also appearing will be Miss New Jersey 2008, Ashley Fairfield. Guests will meet, sign autographs and pose for pictures with supporters of this event. Live music will be per-

formed by the dance cover band Famous by Monday.

For the kids, there will be mascots (the Chick-fil-A cow and Boomer - the Trenton Thunder mascot), prizes, games, and free face painting.

It will be a night of fun, games, food, drink, dancing and great raffle prizes - including a 26" flat screen HDTV - all for a great cause.

Tickets are \$20. This event is free for anyone with military ID, and for kids under 18. Call 609-509-1065 for more information.

Meet Royce Gracie
FUNDRAISER
UFC Legend & Hall of Famer

And help support people with special needs

January 29, 2009
\$20.00 per ticket 6:00 PM
(Kids & Military ID Free)

KAT-MAN-DU Route 29, Trenton, NJ
www.katmandutrenton.com

Also Meet

Miss NJ 2008 Ashley Fairfield

EVENT FEATURES:

- Autograph signing & photo opportunity
- Live Cover Music from Famous by Monday
- Raffle prizes include a 26" flat screen HDTV and gifts from UFC and Tapout
- Sign Language Interpreter is Provided

FOR THE KIDS:

- Appearances by Chick-fil-A cow - games - prizes
- Boomer (Trenton Thunder Mascot) - facepainter

PROUD PARTNERS:

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www.larocca.com

DeVry University
Branch: Trenton, NJ Campus
www.devry.edu

Novnanian
8 Bonanza Hill
Trenton, NJ
www.novnanian.com

For ticket information, please call 609-509-1065 or go to www.alliesbenefit.blogspot.com

Flag ceremonies end at Iraqi palace

1st Sgt. David Moore
JASG-C Public Affairs

If there is one place Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen of the Joint Area Support Group-Central (JASG-C) will remember, it's a pole with a squeaky pulley where hundreds, perhaps thousands, of personal American flags were raised, lowered, folded and sent home. Why military personnel gathered around the flag pole at the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad varied. Some said the flag was flown to honor a family veteran or loved one lost in combat from another war, or simply as a reminder that they are still serving in Iraq for freedom.

For New Jersey Army National Guard Sgt. 1st Class Juan Plata-Santos, a native of Levittown, Pa., and an Operation Desert Storm veteran, the flag ceremony represents completion of a mission he first started about 19 years ago, serving with the 20th Engineer Battalion (Airborne) to liberate Kuwait.

"When we found out the war was over, we were about 60 miles from Baghdad and we were told to turn around and go back," Plata-Santos said of being near Al Najaf in 1991. "Being here now, I wanted to be a part of history of raising the American flag where a dictator used to be and stand in the same place almost 20 years later that, today for Americans as well as Iraqis, represents freedom."

"What I started then ended well. Ten years from now when you hear about Iraq and the term 'palace' or 'Embassy,' you can tell your children and your grandchildren you were there. I can show them that American flag," he explained. As the day grew closer to

return to the government of Iraq the building formerly known to Americans and Iraqis alike as the Republican Palace, then the U.S. Embassy-Baghdad and finally the U.S. Embassy Annex, flag ceremonies held by uniformed personnel grew.

Command Sgt. Maj. David Kenna, JASG-C command sergeant major and a resident of Newfield, N.J., became the person in charge of the flag ceremonies shortly after the Marines left this past year to prepare for the New Embassy Complex opening in Baghdad. Every day, more groups would go to that flag pole. On

"Every day, more groups would go to that flag pole. On the final days, people were rushing to that flag pole. I believe everyone who raised their flags on that flag pole knew the symbolism of raising our national colors over a foreign country's soil, because we are still a nation at war."

-Command Sgt. Maj. David Kenna

the final days, people were rushing to that flag pole. I believe everyone who raised their flags on that flag pole knew the symbolism of raising our national colors over a foreign country's soil, because we are still a nation at war," he said.

A minimum of three personnel began each flag ceremony by taking down the old flag and folding it into a triangle with a partner. Then a new flag taken out of a package or box was hooked and raised by one service member, while remaining troops saluted as it travelled up and down the flag pole. Once the flag was retrieved, two participants would undergo the ceremonial process of folding it into the legendary triangle.

The flag pole was protected by 12-foot-high, concrete T-walls, but when a flag was raised it could be seen flying above the barriers, never hid-

den, for all passing to see. Kenna estimated JASG-C personnel flew close to 250 flags on the pole, but an exact count of flags flown in the past three months is anyone's guess. It appeared that Veterans Day and Christmas Day were the busiest times for raising flags.

Sgt. Brian Kofsky, JASG-C Command Directorate, said the flag he flew was sent home to his family.

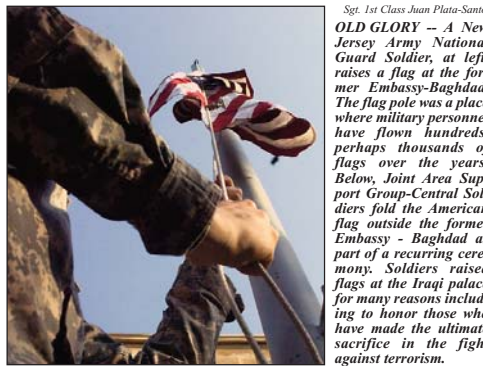
"The flag is a symbol that I am thinking of them. It's my connection to my family," he said. Flying the flag at the former U.S. Embassy in Baghdad was looked at by all services as both a privilege and a benefit. Early accounts of what became a palace tradition note that prior to the Marines, the Pennsylvania Army National Guard began the flag raising ceremonies.

When the grounds were vacated Dec. 30, 2008, it's likely a New Jersey Army National Guard Soldier was one of the last at the flag pole.

While there is no certain date when U.S. Marines first officially became the keeper of the U.S. flags at embassies, history details the first U.S. flag flown on foreign soil after the Marines were victorious at the Battle of Derna, Tripoli, in 1805 when the first U.S. flag was on foreign soil.

With that type of military lineage, the Marine Corps under the provisions of the Foreign Service Act of 1946 began their embassy security mission and flag ceremonies became a part of their security assignments.

"This is to certify that this flag, a symbol of the freedom, strength and resolve of the United States of America, was flown over the United States



Sgt. 1st Class Juan Plata-Santos

OLD GLORY — A New Jersey Army National Guard Soldier, at left, raises a flag at the former Embassy-Baghdad. The flag pole was a place where military personnel have flown hundreds, perhaps thousands of flags over the years. Below, Joint Area Support Group-Central Soldiers fold the American flag outside the former Embassy — Baghdad as part of a recurring ceremony. Soldiers raised flags at the Iraqi palace for many reasons including to honor those who have made the ultimate sacrifice in the fight against terrorism.

Embassy, Baghdad, Iraq. The flag was flown in the face of the enemy and bears witness to the strength and resolve of the American spirit. This flag represents the sustained sacrifices of the American Soldier and the willingness and depth of the values of honor, duty, and selfless sacrifice. This flag honors those who made the ultimate sacrifice in the war against terrorism and those whose lives will forever be

Student concert celebrates season and giving



HAPPY CAROLERS — Fort Dix Elementary School students sing to the Soldiers of Fort Dix's Warrior Transition Unit (WTU), Dec. 18, 2003. The students serenaded the Soldiers with festive holiday songs such as *Jingle Bells*, *We Wish You a Merry Christmas*, and *Frosty the Snowman*.

SHOWER OF SONG — Cecelia Consuegra, left, sings a solo part as Suzy Snowflake during the Fort Dix Elementary School Winter Concert Jan. 13. The concert can be seen on *Pemberton Comcast channel 19*.



SUNNY DAYS — Sophia Ard's and Marilee Perkins' second grade classes sing *The Snowman* during the Fort Dix Elementary School's Winter Concert Jan. 13. Christina Cochling, center, played the part of the snowman as the sun, played by Tyra Rooks, moves in from the right to warm things up a bit. Capt. Joe Snider, Warrior Transition Unit, receives homemade cookies from Fort Dix Elementary School teacher, Jane Statka, Dec. 18, 2008.



FOREST WONDERLAND — Latitia King's and Linda Newman's third grade classes are adorned in woodland firs as they sing *We Are the Pine Trees* and *O Tannenbaum* during the Fort Dix Elementary School Winter Concert Jan. 13. In front of the stand of happy trees hops two rabbits, one white and one brown, played by Gabrielle Hardy and Kaluna Kirkham.

photos by Wayne Cook and Ryan Morton